

on a first visit, arise from the mind being unable to embrace so much variety as is there presented under circumstances of entire novelty;—the crowding of historical recollections and associations—the numerous rooms—the vast quantity of pictures—the state beds and old crockery—pretty walks and stately avenues—gold fish and *monstre* vine—immense façades, quaint court-yards, and other architectural features, each embodying and displaying intact those several characteristics which so well define the progressive changes in the prevalent tastes, during two of the most important centuries in English art-history.

The architecture, he considered, admitted of much profitable study, from its representing two distinct styles, the works of two great masters in the constructive arts, Cardinal Wolsey and Sir Christopher Wren. A comparison between the widely different means employed in the production of palatial magnificence was made, and it was suggested, how differently had beauty been estimated—how strikingly had the phases of the two opposite styles been developed in the Tudor and the Italian, in the contrast of material and the variety of contour. The respective advantages and disadvantages supply much to reflect upon, much to learn, and much to profit by. A description of the old palace built by the Cardinal was then given. The well-designed and well-executed chimney shafts, their sharply moulded caps, forming picturesque clusters around the fine court-yard, the noble gateways, all constructed in admirably ornamented brickwork, with its glowing richness of colour contrasting beautifully against our prevalent cool grey sky, were each respectively alluded to, and the use of artificial cements, now so generally applied to our buildings, was comparatively disapproved of. He advocated the more frequent use of terra cotta; it is very durable, possesses a rich colour, and in many places, such as window and door dressings and architraves, might permit the introduction of forms of greater importance than the conventionalized bracket: and it has especial advantage in not requiring paint to keep it clean, or to preserve it from the influence of the weather.

The next court-yard built by Wren is surrounded by an Italian colonnade, after the manner of the Gothic ambulatories, and presents an imposing appearance. Several beautifully sculptured stone wreaths of flowers, executed under the superintendence of Grinling Gibbons, are admirably arranged within semi-circular arches, and are as sharp as if just from the chisel.

A wish was expressed for casts of these, which by the use of gelatine moulds might be readily obtained and distributed to our schools of design at a trifling cost. This would greatly facilitate the studies of the modeller, the importance of whose skill is beginning to be better recognized. A series of lunettes is arranged between the principal and attic story over the colonnade; and on one side of the court, these are painted with frescoes representing the labours of Hercules: the framework is boldly conceived and well executed in stone, designed from a lion's hide, with head, paws, &c., the shadows being well defined. The pedestals placed in this court, it was said, are finely formed, although deprived of their purpose—an iron bar that projects from the top of each shewing that they once secured some figure (by Farelli), which has been removed.

The reader censured the taste which could leave these pedestals standing with such palpable evidences of despoliation, and also be condemned the presiding taste which continued to denominate this the fountain court, when it had been stripped of the device which adorned the water, and had left standing instead some 3 feet of small gas pipe. He hoped that the name would be altered or a person be permitted to receive subscriptions of pence in a box labelled "Assist the poor fountain," and in a few months it would be no longer necessary to think of changing the name.

The chapel was the next place referred to: it offered an important study in what to avoid. He described it as a victim to perverted extremes in proportion, form, and colour, and to the utmost force conceivable of contrasting oppositions resulting in an impressive jumble to warn us against abandonment with pretty wantonness. That which Walpole said of Verrio, would apply equally well in this in-

stance to Sir Christopher Wren and to "the modern decorator."—"They appear to have spoiled it on principle." Wren spoiled that which Wolsey had left at least "passing good," and the doings of our own times had spoiled in turn the work of Wren.

The open timber roof of this chapel was an elaborate and ingenious construction, somewhat debased in the design of its principal divisions and proportion, as is often noticeable in specimens of late Gothic; the ribs of the arches and the interspersed tracery, broad and massive spandrels, pendants of a singular kind, and other details, which are remarkable for a want of conformity and exaggerated contour. The ribs are ornamented with the egg-and-tongue moulding; the pendants rejoice with ecstatic boys springing out from a basket, and corbel brackets present evidences of burly Italian, ill agreeing with the Gothic character of the roof. All this, however, and even more, it was contended, of strange combination might pass with less censure had it remained simply in oak, as Wren intended; but the incongruities had been rendered more distinct by the power of misapplied colour and the effulgence of misplaced gold. Repose, light, and shade, may be impressive under certain conditions, but in this instance all tended to a "coloured dazzle." The ribs are gilt, the pendants and bosses are gilt, the eggs are golden, the groundwork of the whole ultramarine spangled with stars of gold, some dashes of vermilion laid in the deepest quirks, to give spirit and displace shadows. By such treatment, as explained and shewn by coloured sketches, he considered the proportions had been again changed in a wrong direction, and the roof had been, in effect, brought nearer to the eye. In its previous condition, as left by Wren, the roof of oak, ribs, &c., in quiet and retiring guise of self colour, must have been more in accordance, more retiring from the eye, and invested with the gloomy repose of deep shadows. Another line of argument was then advanced in support of these condemnatory opinions. A comparison was suggested between the gaudy roof and the other features of the interior,—the quiet altar, with its Corinthian columns, elliptic pediment, and crimson velvet hangings, the somewhat *petite* character of ornamental paintings by Verrio on the piers and windows, the plain wainscoting around the pews, and the pews themselves. It was maintained that, in a perverse spirit, reason had been trifled with, and the laws of harmonious decoration set at defiance; that we have here an instance of the incongruity in combining Italian with Gothic, literally depicted in strong colours. Attention was directed to the well-conceived and finely-executed pendant pilasters, arranged on each side of the picture over the communion table. They were carved by Gibbons, and few of his works are so happily treated in the details as well as in the general outline. Other carvings below the cornice of the wainscoting display much of his style in pleasing variety: a combination of the flowing palm with the acanthus was alluded to as admirable for its simplicity, and being "easily read," as well as illustrating the picturesque manner in which the round fullness of one class of botanical forms may be contrasted with the angularity of others. It was remarked that a large window of similar construction to the beautiful one at the west end of the Great Hall had been accidentally discovered a few years ago, in excellent preservation, and still remains concealed behind the altar, as left by Wren.\*

**SOCIETY OF ARTS.**—The first meeting of the present session was held at the society's house, on Wednesday evening last, when a communication was read by Mr. T. M. Gladstone, on iron bridge building, with some remarks explanatory of his plan for constructing a malleable iron lever bridge.

**HIGH ART v. UPHOLSTERY.**—We have money enough to spend on cumulous furniture, which another generation will throw into the garret as antiquated and absurd; but we cannot afford to adorn our walls with the productions of genius, which delineate the unchanging beauties of nature or the grandeur of man, and to which the lapse of time will impart only new value.—*Channing.*

\* Remainder hereafter.

## LODGINGS FOR THE POOR.

AMONGST the many improvements of this vast metropolis (and we see them in every quarter, from Bethnal-green to Paddington), we behold enlarged thoroughfares, lofty houses, architectural elevations, and many noble edifices—the crooked ways are made straight and the rough places plain—but those who can recollect the locations of the poor before their demolition, are lost in conjecture, whither can the unhoused artisan or labourer turn for a dwelling, for he cannot find one in the vicinage of the old quarters.

It is known that the parishes of St. Giles's, in its pristine state of agglomerated population, contained some 10,000 inhabitants: those were generally penned in separate families occupying one room each, on an average of six persons to a chamber; but frequently were the chambers hired out at 3s. a room to speculators, who erected six beds, or something answering instead of a bed, which by them were let to occasional lodgers at 2d. a night per bed: this would pay the humble lodging-letter 1s. a night, or 4s. profit per week on every room he thus rented.)

All these have been swept away in this quarter, and very many more in other regions of the city; but whither are the denizens of such slums departed?

Palaces rise around us on all sides, mansions for the noble, clubs for the middle order, and squares and terraces for the wealthy; but we look in vain for suitable provision for the poor, who have been driven far afield from the sphere of their occupation.

It is natural to infer that the denizens of those now embellished neighbourhoods found a convenience in dwelling there, and that their employment was not remote therefrom; for certainly the aspect of St. Giles's, as it was in 1830, was no inducement to the meanest beggar for the adoption of such a home: it had no drains, little ventilation, and seemed to be a sort of Alsatia on Sundays, when full; or a desert in the oasis on week-days, when emptied of its operative miseries. Whether the scavenger or dustman ever visited its *de-files*, was, I believe, unknown to the citizens; but the necessity for their operations was but too obvious to the senses of the wanderer who, on those days, looking for a short cut to Oxford-street, happened to take the continuous line from Bloomsbury in that direction.

On the site of all the modern improvements introduced in this parish, the only reservation made for the shelter of the class thus rooted out, there is but one building erected, and that is the model lodging-house. This house is constantly full: although the charge for beds is over 3d. a night, nevertheless it is to many single men a great convenience and source of comfort; but no houses have been erected, even in the cross lanes, for the accommodation of families.

The rental of the leading street is too high for such a purpose, as it ranges at from two to three guineas a foot frontage per annum; but still there are many houses (both old and new) which might be converted to such uses, with profit to individuals or companies. At the same time, if such houses were constructed, it would be very desirable that open spaces should be reserved in the rear thereof, both for ventilation, drying linen, recreation of children, and other family uses. As to the model lodging-house, although the benevolence of its founders cannot be for a moment questioned, it would have been much better had it also an open space behind: it is certainly clean, but there is no thorough ventilation; and the greatest objection to the construction is as to the extent of the dormitories, which contain as many as 18 beds in one room! These beds are fenced off by seven-feet partitions—are furnished cleanly and comfortably, and provided with locks and keys; but would it not have been better to adopt sleeping-rooms for no more than four individuals? Some may retire to rest as early as eight o'clock (and working men who have to rise at five; or earlier, must rest early), others may keep dropping in fitfully till eleven o'clock, and thus disturb the wearied sleeper: besides, amongst so many, sickness or inebriety may sometimes occasion a restless night, not to speak of other objections.

These hints are dropped in hope of improving the condition of those who are de-